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11 killed in Taraba as bandits murder Sokoto traditional ruler

LOCAL residents of Murbai, Kisbap, Sembe, and Yawai – Abbare villages of Ardo-Kola and Jalingo Local Government Areas in Taraba State said 11 people were killed and scores injured when armed Fulani gunmen invaded their villages, yesterday.

The villages are located on the outskirts of Jalingo the state capital.

One of the residents, Hon. Cyprian Kamai said the trouble started four days ago, at Yawai village, when a Fulani herdsman invaded the farm of one of the locals and, in an attempt to stop his cows from further encroachment, the herdsman stabbed him with a matchet.

According to him, efforts by the community leaders to address the issue failed as the Fulani herdsmen mobilised and attacked Murbai,

Kisbap and other villages leaving several people dead.

Kamai, who said hundreds of the displaced persons are taking refuge in Kona village, and Nunkai Primary School, in Jalingo, called on security agencies to deploy officers in the area.

“Those displaced need humanitarian assistance and I want to call on the government to provide relief materials to the IDPs.”

Mrs. Rebecca Awoshiri, at Nukkai IDP Camp, said five people were killed at Murbai while six were killed at Sembe village.

But, the Police/Public Relations Officer in the state, DSP David Misal, who confirmed the attack, said only six people were killed and scores displaced in the attacks which began on Monday.

“One person was killed on Monday when the crisis started and yesterday five more corpses were recovered.

“We have already deployed enough security personnel in the area and, as we speak, the Deputy Commissioner in charge of Operations, Mr. Faleye Olaleye, is on ground; with personnel, to ensure restoration of peace in the area,” he said.

Meanwhile, suspected gunmen, on Tuesday, stormed Balle community in Gudu Local Government Area of Sokoto State, and shot dead its tradition ruler, Aliyu Ibrahim.

A witness said the gunmen stormed the community on motorcycles and shot sporadically in the air and, in the process, residents ran into hiding; to avoid being hit by stray bul-

lets. He added that the gunmen then went straight to Balle Police Station where they burned down patrol vehicles and the building before moving to the palace of the district head. They gunned him down in cold blood, said the source, who requested not to be named for security reasons.

Balle is the headquarters of Gudu Local Government Area, and an ancient community. In 1804, it was the capital of Sokoto caliphate. It shares boundary with the Republic of Niger.

“The gunmen, upon arrival to the emir’s palace, found the compound gate was locked. They, however, jumped through the fence while others were stationed outside. After killing the district head, they rode their motorcycles and fled,” the witness said.